



NEWS RELEASE

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Botetourt County Sees First Confirmed Case COVID-19

In light of the recent confirmation of the first case of COVID-19 in the Alleghany Health District, local officials were notified late Thursday afternoon that the confirmed case is a resident of Botetourt County. Carilion Clinic notified the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and the County of this confirmed case to ensure local public health and public safety officials were aware and could continue the precautions necessary to mitigate further spread.

The confirmation of this case coming from Botetourt County does not change any of the guidance issued from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) or VDH. In fact, officials highly encourage citizens, businesses, and visitors to continue social distancing efforts.

Furthermore, as a proactive approach, the County has already closed its offices, libraries, recreation facilities, and fire and EMS stations to the public to help limit person-to-person contact and reduce any potential exposure. Botetourt County Public Schools have also been closed in accordance with an order by Governor Northam. Lastly, the County joined other regional localities in declaring local states of emergency to help respond to the needs of the community.

"We have been and continue to prepare for and respond to the evolving public health emergency. We continue to urge everyone to maintain vigilance and follow the guidance being issued by the CDC and VDH," said Chief of Fire and EMS Jason Ferguson. "The fact that a positive case has been identified locally does not change the reality that this is a highly communicable virus that can be transmitted without even knowing you are sick. Please take this pandemic seriously and practice social distancing and all other recommended practices to stop its spread."

Botetourt County officials are continuing to monitor this situation and have been for some time. The County is analyzing credible information sources to help determine the probability of risk to the County and its citizens and visitors. Decisions made now to help mitigate the spread of the virus can greatly help in the future.

"We are saddened to learn that the first confirmed case of COVID-19 is a resident of Botetourt County," said County Administrator Gary Larowe. "As we think about the impact on our community, we will continue to remain vigilant. These times are unprecedented, so we are encouraging everyone to stay safe and take necessary precautions for their families and loved ones."

County officials will be reassessing the situation on a continual basis and will provide additional information as appropriate.